

Notes from the President

Celebrating Georgia Tech-Lorraine's First 25 years with the GTL Community

05/27/2016

We arrived in Metz late last night and got off to an early start this morning when Val and I joined the faculty, staff, students, and other invited guests to celebrate Georgia Tech-Lorraine's (GTL's) 25th anniversary. We were honored that so many French government leaders joined us for the celebration, including Amy P. Westling, U.S. consul general in Strasbourg; Jean-Luc Bohl, president of Metz Métropole; Dominique Gros, mayor of Metz; and Francois Lavergne, vice-president, Departmental Council of Moselle.

As our first and oldest international program, Georgia Tech-Lorraine is the destination for our largest group of students who are seeking international, educational, social, and cultural learning experiences. As part of our efforts in Metz, we have established significant partnerships with European R&D industries, institutions of higher education in France and Europe, and also strategic alliances with a number of companies and government and nongovernment organizations that align with our mission. In the past few years, we have established partnerships with CNRS and the Lafayette Institute, as well as our strategic alliance with CentraleSupélec, ENSAM ParisTech, and several others.

We started the day with an overview of our activities associated with GTL and then attended a VIP meeting where we were very warmly received by all the dignitaries. This was followed by a visit to the Institut Lafayette and update on the remarkable ongoing research activities underway there. Much has happened since our last visit two years ago when we formally dedicated this joint research facility. The research being conducted here has a very strong industrial focus and is very complementary to what we are doing in Atlanta, both the work underway by our research faculty and the researchers at GTRI. We concluded our visit with the formal Anniversary Celebration and lunch, which were attended by several hundred individuals.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of our visit was to be able to meet and talk with some of our Georgia Tech students studying at the GTL campus. One of them is Samy Hocine, the first recipient of the Challenge Scholarship, which was launched last year. Samy will soon graduate with his MS in Mechanical Engineering and is a great example of the importance of global engagement and the impact of making international educational experiences available to our students. We know that many employers are seeking graduates such as Samy who have international experience, a global perspective, and intercultural skills.

From Metz we were off to Paris, where we gathered with nearly 300 Georgia Tech alumni at a wonderful venue on the Champs-Élysées. Outside the U.S., France has the largest number of Georgia Tech alumni, and it was great to hold an event with so many loyal alums in attendance. We are grateful to Aurelien Cottet, former GT Club de France president, and Sébastien Leclerc, the club's current president, for their leadership and hospitality. We had an opportunity to share some of the exciting things happening on our Atlanta campus this year, and strengthened ties with some of our Georgia Tech alumni living in the area. We were also able to talk about the impact of philanthropy on people such as Samy Hocine, who joined us for the evening and shared his experiences at Georgia Tech-Lorraine, highlighting the impact Georgia Tech has had on his life and career aspirations.

When sharing highlights from this past academic year, I talked about NASA's announcement in September 2015 of the discovery of liquid water on Mars. Participating in the live TV and web

broadcast from our campus in France was Lujendra Ojha, a Georgia Tech Ph.D. student who led the study. There were more than 3,000 media stories around the world. I couldn't help but think of all the opportunities he has taken advantage of to enrich his Georgia Tech education with a global perspective that he will carry the rest of his life.

All in all, it was a great day for us personally and also for Georgia Tech, as we continue to expand our global reach and impact and provide life-changing experiences for our students!

G. P. "Bud" Peterson
President, Georgia Tech